

ELIGIBILITY FOR VA RESEARCH SUPPORT HANDBOOK

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook replaces VHA policy for eligibility to receive research support from the Office of Research and Development (ORD).

2. SUMMARY OF MAJOR CHANGES: The principal changes are:

a. **Paragraph 1:** Defines consistent eligibility requirements which apply to all research services within the ORD (Medical Research Service, Rehabilitation Research and Development Service, Health Services Research and Development Service, and the Cooperative Studies Program).

b. **Paragraph 4:** Requires approval of all exceptions to eligibility requirements by the Chief Research and Development Officer (CRADO).

3. RELATED DIRECTIVE: VHA Directive 1200, to be issued.

4. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: The Office of Research and Development (12) is responsible for the contents of this VHA Handbook.

5. RESCISSION: This VHA Handbook rescinds VHA Directive 10-95-036, dated March 31, 1995.

6. RECERTIFICATION: This document is scheduled for recertification on or before the last working date of April 2006.

S/ by Dennis H. Smith for
Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Under Secretary for Health

DISTRIBUTION: CO: E-mailed 4/25/2001
FLD: VISN, MA, DO, OC, OCRO, and 200 – E-mailed 4/25/2001

CONTENTS

ELIGIBILITY FOR VA RESEARCH SUPPORT HANDBOOK

PARAGRAPH	PAGE
1. Purpose	1
2. Scope	1
3. Reciprocity	2
4. Exceptions	2
5. Inquiries	2
 APPENDIX A	
Contact Information	A-1

ELIGIBILITY FOR VA RESEARCH SUPPORT

1. PURPOSE

This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook defines the criteria for eligibility to receive research support from the Office of Research and Development (ORD). **NOTE:** *The provisions of this Handbook apply to all research services within the ORD (Medical Research Service (MRS), Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (RR&D), Health Services Research and Development Service (HSR&D), and the Cooperative Studies Program (CSP)).*

2. SCOPE

a. **Background.** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) research program is an intramural program. The ORD allocates appropriated Medical and Prosthetic Research funds to VA medical facilities for scientifically meritorious research related to the high priority health care needs of veterans to be conducted by VA employees. VA investigators may also obtain funding support for their research from extramural sources such as other Federal agencies, private voluntary health organizations and foundations, and commercial entities. Unlike agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense, VA does not have the statutory authority to make research grants to colleges and universities, cities and states, or any other non-VA entity.

b. **Requirements.** Research funds may be awarded only to a Principal Investigator (PI) or co-Principal Investigator (co-PI) whose employment status and activities demonstrate that the primary professional commitment is to VA. The eligibility of each prospective PI and co-PI must be established prior to the funding of a research proposal. The PI (and co-PI) must meet all of the following requirements:

(1) **VA Employment Status.** A current VA paid appointment of at least 5/8 time is required before a research project can be funded. VA employment status of each PI (and co-PI, if applicable) must be indicated on the proposal for funding. The signatures of the PI (and co-PI) and the Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development (ACOS/R&D) constitute verification of the 5/8 minimum requirement.

(2) **Physical Presence at VA.** VA research must be conducted, principally, on VA premises. The PI (and co-PI) must have designated research space within a VA medical center. The specific research performance site address must be indicated on the proposal for funding and verified by the required signatures.

(3) **Commitment to VA.** The PIs (and co-PIs) curriculum vitae or biographic sketch is expected to provide evidence of past and current roles and responsibilities within VA, including research, patient care, teaching, committee work, etc.

c. **Terms.** Eligibility for VA research support remains in effect unless or until there is a change in the investigator's status relative to any of the preceding requirements.

(1) The ACOS/R&D is responsible for informing the Director of the appropriate research service of any change in the investigator's status (for example, if a PI's VA employment status falls below 5/8).

(2) By accepting VA research funds, the investigator (and any co-investigators) is expected to comply with VHA policy regarding the acknowledgement of VA support in publications and presentations (refer to VHA Handbook 1200.19 for detailed information).

3. RECIPROCITY

Eligibility determinations are made by the individual research service, and these determinations are not reciprocal.

4. EXCEPTIONS

To meet special needs of VA, exceptions to the requirements for eligibility will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such requests must be submitted by the medical center Director in a letter to the Director of the appropriate research service, with the endorsement of the ACOS/R&D and Chief of Staff, on behalf of the prospective investigator, and including detailed supporting documents. All exceptions to VA eligibility rules must be approved by the Chief Research and Development Officer (CRADO). *NOTE: Requests for exception to the requirement for physical presence at VA is to be submitted in accordance with procedures described in the VHA Handbook 1200.16, "Off-Site Research."*

5. INQUIRIES

Information regarding points of contact for eligibility issues is contained in Appendix A.

CONTACT INFORMATION

1. Inquiries regarding eligibility issues should be directed to:

- a. **Medical Research Service (121E)**
(202) 408-3613 or (202) 408-3610
- b. **Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (122)**
(202) 408-3670
- c. **Health Services Research and Development Service (124I)**
(202) 273-6812
- d. **Cooperative Studies Program (125A)**
(202) 273-8861

2. Information forwarded by mail should be addressed to the Department of Veterans Affairs as follows:

a. Medical Research Service

Medical Research Service (121E)
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20420

If courier or commercial overnight delivery service is used, send to:

Medical Research Service (121E)
1400 Eye Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 408-3600

b. Rehabilitation Research and Development Service

Rehabilitation R&D Service (122)
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20420

If courier or commercial overnight delivery service is used, send to:

Rehabilitation R&D Service (122)
1400 Eye Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 408-3670

c. Health Services Research and Development Service

Health Services R&D Service (124I)
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20420
(202) 273-6812

d. Cooperative Studies Program

Cooperative Studies Program (125A)
810 Vermont Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20420
(202) 273-8861